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**General Interest**

In *The Amateur Amateur: The Manual - and Why We Don't Read It* the author comments on some of the idiotic cautions given in user manuals and offers his opinions on what most of us do.

**Communications**

In *World of Blogging* the author writes a somewhat lengthy discussion in a beginner's guide to blogging.

In *Breaking Out of Radio Purgatory* the author introduces you to Pandora a reasonably priced subscription service which plays music with no or limited commercials. The site states:

"Pandora is based on the Music Genome Project, the most sophisticated taxonomy of musical information ever collected. It represents over eight years of analysis by our trained team of musicologists, and spans everything from this past Tuesday's new releases all the way back to the Renaissance and Classical music."

In *Rendering Error in Firefox 3.5* Carl Tenning discusses an idiosyncrasy that he discovered in the way Firefox interprets the commands that controls comments in the code that displays pages on his web page

**Operating System**

In *On the Subject of Hard Drive Failures* Carl Tenning discusses a technique to prevent the loss of saved data if it is necessary to reformat a hard drive.

In *The "%" Character in URL's* Carl Tenning gives us a listing of lesser known characters, such as %20 for a space, that seem to intrude themselves in web addresses.

In *What is "URL" Coding?* Carl Tenning gives you a short lesson on how URL codes can be configured, sometimes with malicious intent. Take a look. It is a short read.

In the article *Prepare a Windows 7 Repair Disc* the author notes: "Today's Windows 7 computers typically don't ship with a system repair disk, and that's a major problem if that computer suffers a crash. If you don't have a system repair disk, you're literally up the creek without a paddle." If you are running Windows 7 you should take a look at this article.

In *Safe Mode* the author discusses how to get into Safe Mode and still have the ability to run programs that will get rid of viruses and other nasties.

In *Do You Know the Difference Between http and https?* the author notes that the "s" stands for Secure and discusses what that means to you.



## GENERAL INTEREST

### **The Amateur Amateur: The Manual -- and Why We Don't Read It**

TAGS: Gary Hoffman, KB0H Contributing Editor, remote control 11/06/2010

I bought a DVD player yesterday. It had a manual, of course, but it also had a Quick Start guide. The Quick Start guide showed me everything I needed to know to install the unit, and I figured out everything else by playing around with the remote control for a few minutes. I didn't bother to look at the manual until the following day, and then I only scanned the main themes to see if there was a feature I had missed.

Why is it that so many of us simply don't read the manuals? Do we have some internal flaw, such as a vitamin D deficiency, or is there something wrong with the manuals themselves? Surely we want to know how to operate our equipment properly. What mysterious force keeps us from picking up that book and reading it?

The more I thought about that perplexing conundrum the more I realized that there is no single reason for it. There is no one thing that I can point to and say, "This is it! Change X and we will forevermore read the manual as soon as we open the box!"

So, in our quest for an understanding of why we don't read the manual, let's start with that box. As soon as we open it we see the prized gadget that we saved up our allowance to buy, that thing we lusted after and that our parents or spouse said that we shouldn't waste our money buying. And now we have it. We want to hold it, caress it and start playing with it right away. We tear through the packaging and wrapping and immediately plug it in and turn it on. The very last thing on our minds is that booklet sitting in the bottom of the box. We've waited and waited and now that we have our beloved gadget we want to use it. Put simply, we are just too impatient to read the manual first.

I think that is the primary reason the manual gets overlooked, the excitement of our new toy. Oh, we fully intend to read the manual, eventually. It's just that right now the adrenaline is flowing and at the very least we want to see the ON indicator light up. Sometimes we do get around to looking through the manual, but often it gets forgotten until that ON indicator fails to light.

I believe that another problem is that the manuals are rarely the way we or Goldilocks would like them: Just Right. Some manuals are abysmally short. They tell us, often in horribly fractured English, to take the gadget out of the box, set it right-side-up and plug in. Gee, like we couldn't figure that out on our own. The product registration card, on the other hand, is well-

written and goes into great detail. Unfortunately, those details are all about us, not the product.

The opposite extreme, of course, is the manual that is the size of a phone book; just picking it up is painful. And whatever strength reading glasses you start with, you're going to need stronger ones by the time you finish going through it. For that matter, your gadget may be obsolete by the time you get through one of those tedious tomes. The manufacturer often realizes this, which is why that Quick Start guide is included.

I'm not saying that manuals shouldn't contain copious amounts of data about the products. Indeed, they should. We certainly want all of the features to be explained in detail. We're happy that there is a troubleshooting guide (though I've yet to see one describe any problem that I've encountered). Parts lists and schematics are nice, too, for the technically-minded set. All I'm saying is that it's a lot of stuff to go through.

Sometimes the product itself makes the manual overwhelming. Some gadgets simply have too many features. When I buy a transceiver, I'm usually only interested in a handful of features. The most complicated things that I want it to do are handle repeater splits and include a CTCSS tone. But I'd be hard pressed to find even a hand held transceiver that has less than 700 features these days, all of them controlled by just three buttons and every one of them described in excruciating detail in the manual. Reading through such a manual is all-too-reminiscent of slogging through the textbook of some subject I hated when I was in high school. Yeah, an occasional bit will be interesting, but most of it is dull, dull, dull.

Let's suppose, though, that you have a great amount of self-discipline and you fully intend to read the manual from cover to cover before you even remove the bubble wrap from your new gadget. You are going to commit every detail of the gadget's operation to memory and you are going to completely understand every facet of its operation before you put a single fingerprint on it. Wonderful. Let's begin.

Page 1.

Congratulations on the purchase of your new XXX333-M(A) Self-Controlled Gizmotronic Gadget. Before using your Gadget, please take a moment to read these safety precautions.

Do not take your gadget with you when you get in the shower.

Do not place your gadget inside of a microwave oven. (Note: It is also inadvisable to place your gadget inside a conventional oven, gas or electric. Avoid toaster ovens altogether.)

There are no user-serviceable components inside your gadget, but if you do decide to open it, we strongly advise that you do not use an acetylene torch.

Do not use your gadget to prop up your vehicle while changing a tire.

Do not use gasoline, paint thinner or hydrochloric acid to clean your gadget.

Your gadget is not rated to operate in the vacuum of space.

Use only conventional 120 v ac. Do not try to power your gadget from lightning strikes or by connecting it to electric eels.

Gravel can mar the finish of your gadget.

Do not force Jell-o™ through the vents of your gadget.

And so it goes, page after page of prohibitions against acts that only a blithering idiot would attempt. Of course, all of these warnings are in the manual because the federal government insists that they be present. And the federal government makes such demands precisely because, at one time or another, some blithering idiot did attempt such an act. We can thank such folk for the content of the first 20 pages of our manuals.

Perhaps the best excuse of all for not reading the manual is that it isn't readable. In an effort to save money, some manufacturers write the manual on a CD rather than printing it. So if you wish to read the manual before operating your gadget, you're going to have to find a computer. And if the computer isn't conveniently located near where you wish to install your gadget, well, you're going to have to print a copy of the manual yourself. And if it's a sizeable manual, well...

Sigh.

I've often wondered about computers that come with the manual burned onto a CD, or worse, written on the computer's hard drive. How are you supposed to read the troubleshooting guide if the computer won't start?

Anyway, to summarize, we don't read the manual because we're excited by the arrival of our new gadget, because the manual barely says anything at all, because the manual is much too lengthy, because 90 percent of the manual is not applicable to what we wish to do with our gadget, because most of the manual is deadly dull, because the whole first chapter is aimed at people who, in all likelihood, can't read anyway, and/or (pause for breath) the manual is on a CD and it's just too inconvenient to print it out.

And, if after all that, you do always read the manual first, well, I guess someone has to be the elmer.

*Editor's note: ARRL member Gary Hoffman, KB0H, lives in Florissant, Missouri. He's been a ham since 1995. Hoffman says his column's name -- "The Amateur Amateur" -- suggests the explorations of a rank amateur, not those of an experienced or knowledgeable ham. His wife, Nancy, is N0NJ. Hoffman has a ham-related Web page. Readers are invited to contact the author via e-mail.*

## COMMUNICATIONS NOTES & TIPS

### World of Blogging

by M.L. Giggelman, HAL-PC Journal



This is the first in a series of how-to articles to introduce you to the world of blogging using Google's Blogger.

First of all, what is a blog? A bit of history on the origins of the term **weblog** and **blog**: Jorn Barger coined the term "*weblog*" on December 17, 1997. The contracted form, "*blog*," was coined by Peter Merholz, who jokingly broke the word '*weblog*' into the phrase '*we blog*' in the sidebar of his blog Peterme.com in April or May 1999. This was quickly adopted as both a noun and verb.

Used as a **noun**, a blog is a type of website where entries are made, usually daily, to serve as a public-accessible journal or diary. Basically, most of us will use a blog to publish our thoughts and interests. Entries are displayed in a reverse chronological order, that is, with the current date on top. Readers can post comments, but only if you allow it.

Used as **verb**, blog means to maintain or add content to a blog.

You can post text, links, photos, video clips, sound clips, etc. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs and/or web pages, and other media related to its topic. Most blogs are mainly textual, although some focus on photographs (photoblog), videos (vlog), or audio (podcasting).

#### Google's Blogger defines "blog" this way:

*"In simple terms, a blog is a web site, where you write stuff on an ongoing basis. New stuff shows up at the top, so your visitors can read what's new. Then they comment on it or email you. Or not.*

*Since Blogger was launched&hellip;blogs have reshaped the web, impacted politics, shaken up journalism, and enabled millions of people to have a voice and connect with others. And we're pretty sure the whole deal is just getting started"*

Now, what is a blogger? A blogger usually refers to the person who blogs, but it can also refer to the software tools used to create and publish a blog such as Google's Blogger, MySpace, LiveJournal. (For different blogger software and links, visit [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog_software) Wikipedia's "Blog Software" page.)

We are going to be dealing specifically with Google's Blogger, which is very popular, easy to use and free. Blogger has an about page <[www.blogger.com/about](http://www.blogger.com/about)> if you want to learn a bit about its development from the three friends at Pyra Labs.

To create a Blogger blog, you must have a Google Account. You may already have an account for one of the many Google products: Gmail, Docs, Earth, Mobile, YouTube, Picasa, Tool Bar, plus many others.

You can create a Google account by signing up for any of the above products, or go to <<https://www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount>>.

You also need an existing email address to create a blog. Opening a Gmail account will take care of both requirements. Many people create a special email account just for blogging. In this article, we created a new Gmail account (<<mailto:mlg.halpc@gmail.com>>) just for our new blog. Publishing your email address is optional and you can have comments to your blog sent to you via this email.

Once you have a Google Account set up, you are now ready to create a new blog.

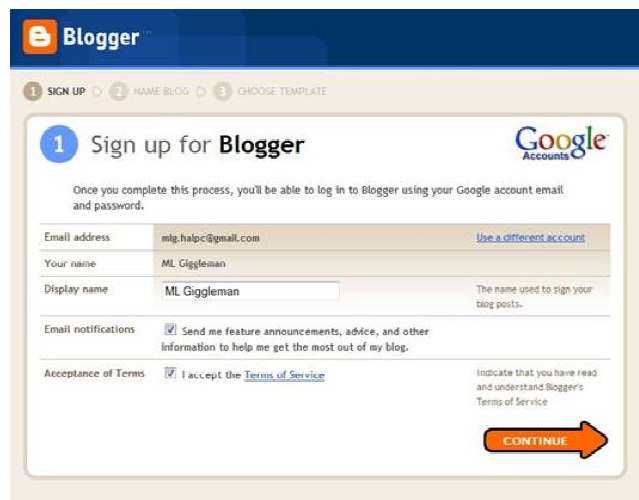


This is the Blogger Home Page (<[www.blogger.com/](http://www.blogger.com/)>). You can sign into your Google account from this screen. Or, if you need to create an account, just click on the *Sign In* button, with both fields empty.

This page also presents links to information and learning tools for Blogger.

Now you are only three steps away from creating a Blogger blog: sign up, select a name, and select the template.

To get started, click the *Create A Blog* button.



You should be on the *Sign Up* page. If you are already logged in, your email address and name will be filled in. To the right is a link if you want to use a different account. If you are not logged in, you will be prompted to do so.

You will fill in a *Display Name*. This is the name that will be used to sign your blog posts.

You can check the *Email Notifications* box if you want to receive periodic announcements from Blogger.

Finally, click on the *Terms of Service* link to view and then check the box to accept.

When you are finished, click on *Continue* to go to Step 2 and give your blog a name.



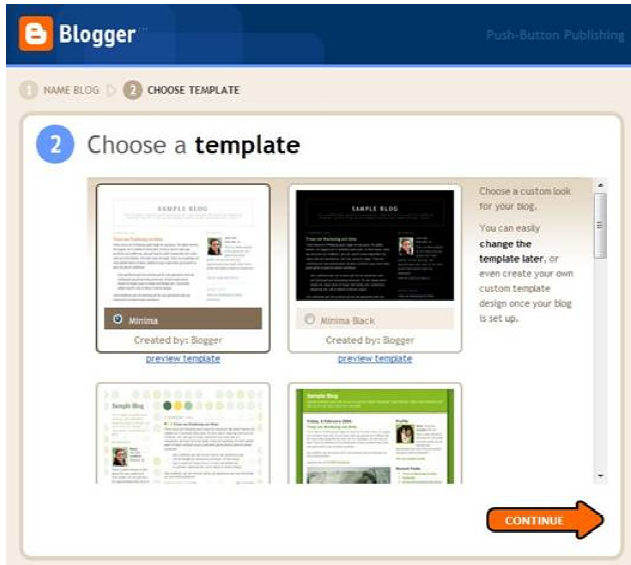
Next, you select your *Blog Title* and the *Blog Address* or URL.

The *Blog Title* will appear at the top of your blog. It can be changed at any time.

The *Blog Address* is a standard URL used to link to your blog. It cannot be changed. It must be a unique name. Once

you make an entry, click on the link below the box, *Check Availability*, to see if your choice is in use. We entered “*mlg-halpc-testblog*” and then clicked on “*Check Availability*”. It responded that this address was not in use and available. The URL used to access this blog will be “*<http://mlg-halpc-testblog.blogspot.com/>*”.

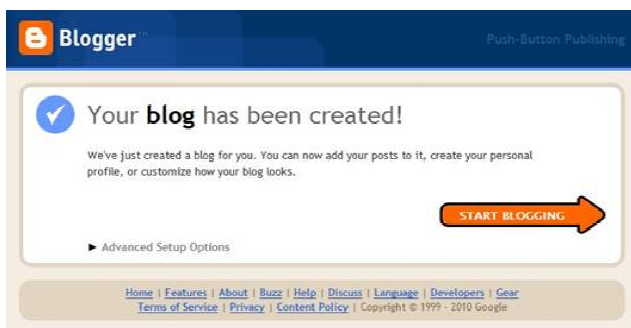
Click on *Continue* to go to the final step in creating a blog, selecting a template.



The template defines your blog's look and feel. It can be changed later. Blogger gives you a few choices and there are numerous third party templates available. There are a few of the most popular listed in the sidebar to this article.

Use the vertical slide bar on the right to scroll up and down the page to view all the available templates. Under each is a “*preview template*” link - click and it shows a sample to give you an idea what each template looks like with information entered.

Once you select a template, click on the “*Continue*” arrow. You will see a final screen stating that you successfully created a blog.



That's it. The blog has been created.

To begin blogging, click on “*Start Blogging*”. We will

begin here in the next article, where we enter text and photos using the post editor.

Again, to access this blog, use the URL *<http://mlg-halpc-testblog.blogspot.com/>* Here is the newly created blog.



## Blogger Resources

### Free Blogger Templates

For more, Google *free blogger templates*

[All Blog Tools](http://www.allblogtools.com/) *<www.allblogtools.com/>*

[BieTemplates](http://www.bietemplates.com/) *<www.bietemplates.com/>*

[BTemplates](http://btemplates.com/) *<http://btemplates.com/>*

[Blogger Buster](http://www.bloggerbuster.com/) *<www.bloggerbuster.com/>*

[Pyzam](http://www.pyzam.com/bloggertemplates/) *<www.pyzam.com/bloggertemplates/>*

[Jackbook](http://jackbook.com/category/blogger-templates-gallery/) *<http://jackbook.com/category/blogger-templates-gallery/>*

### Getting Help Blogging

For more, Google *blogger help*

Blogger Status *<http://status.blogger.com/>*

Blogger Help *<http://help.blogger.com/>*

YouTube Help *<www.youtube.com/bloggerhelp>*

Google Group *<http://groups.google.com/group/blogger-help>*

### About me:

*ML Gigglesman is a long-time member of HAL-PC. She assists KC, a Tough-A\*\* Tortie, run The Cat Blogosphere, a website devoted to blogging cats and their people. (<www.blog.catblogosphere.com/>) KC shares a blog with her sisters Missy Blue Eyes and Faith Boomerang, and brothers Sol, Smokey and BJ. (http://missyblueeyes.blogspot.com/)*

## Breaking Out of Radio Purgatory!

by Drew Kwashnak, Danbury Area Computer Society, Inc.

At one time or another you always find yourself in radio purgatory; where every station is running commercials or worse, talking. Just about every major radio station out there has a means on their website to stream their show to your computer. Unfortunately this means you get commercials and talking DJs not only in your car, but at your desk too! Don't you wish you could find a station that just plays the music you want?

What I've found to be the best solution for radio purgatory has been the Internet radio station Pandora <[www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com)>. Unlike listening to an over-the-air station where they play music without any of your input, with Pandora you set up your stations based on an artist, album, song or genre and as songs are selected you vote for those you like, and those you don't.

According to the Pandora website:

“Pandora is based on the Music Genome Project, the most sophisticated taxonomy of musical information ever collected. It represents over eight years of analysis by our trained team of musicologists, and spans everything from this past Tuesday's new releases all the way back to the Renaissance and Classical music.”

So in other words when you want to listen to Mozart, you don't end up with Metallica!

Because of this work with the Music Genome Project, I have found that the selection of appropriate and related music has been very good. Even then, sometimes a song comes through that makes me wonder, “How did THAT get picked?” Usually I end up voting it off my station rather than looking why it got picked.



The selection process is actually very easy. Each song that is played offers to show information such as Lyrics, Artist Bio and Similar Artists. Between voting for or against the song there is a Menu of choices like

- **I'm Tired of this song**, which puts the song on the shelf for a while.
- **Why was this song selected**, which I think is self-explanatory
- **Move song to another section** will move the song to one of the other stations you have saved, voting it down for the current station and up for the new one.
- **New Station...** will allow you to create a new stations based on the artist or song.

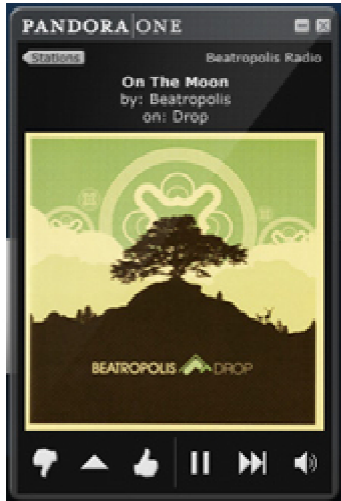
This Flash-based player is compact and very easy to navigate. For other devices, I believe there is an App for Pandora available for the iOS products iPhone, iPod and iPad as well as Android and possibly others. In addition there are DVRs, TiVo and radios available to play Pandora through the system's speakers to really blow out your neighbor's windows.

With all these great features, you may wonder “what's the catch?” The catch is that you are limited with the basic, free membership to 40 hours of play time a month and a single advertisement every so often. The commercials come as one commercial once in a while, which is more tolerable than stations running commercial after commercial until there are more commercials than music!

If you run out of time, the music stops but that isn't the end of it! At that point you are given a pair of choices; pay \$0.99 to continue playing the rest of the month with unlimited play time, or spend \$36 per year for their premium Pandora One subscription. I listen at work and pause when I am not at my desk. Usually I run out about 2 to 2/12 weeks into the month. So I opt for the \$0.99 for the rest of the month option.



When you run out of time, you get two choices.



With the Pandora One subscription you get unlimited playing time, a higher bit rate for better music quality, no advertisements of any sort and the availability of a desktop player that doesn't require you to leave a browser open, using the Adobe Air technology.

I have found Pandora to be one of the best Internet radio stations I

have come across for listening while I am at work. It provides multiple stations to fit my often wildly changing moods, and keeps the songs relevant. So the next time you want to re-enact Tom Cruz's dance moves from Risky Business, or croon your spouse with some Sinatra, give Pandora a try.

*Drew Kwashnak goes through vast musical mood swings in the course of a workday. Pandora has helped to sooth the savage beast whether he's head banging to heavy metal, or meditating to a Zen like state with piano solos and lots and lots in between.*

## Rendering Error in Firefox 3.6

By Carl Tenning

Tacoma Open Group For Microcomputers

The other day, I was dismayed to discover that Firefox would not properly display my web page. At first I thought that my page had been hacked by some no-gooders. But logging into the server host it did not show anything amiss. I then checked the page with Microsoft IE8 and everything looked OK. Same with the Chrome and Opera browsers. Viewing the page with the Firefox 3.6 browser, however, was missing several of the images and had a messed up table. Here is how the one segment of the page appeared in Firefox 3.6:

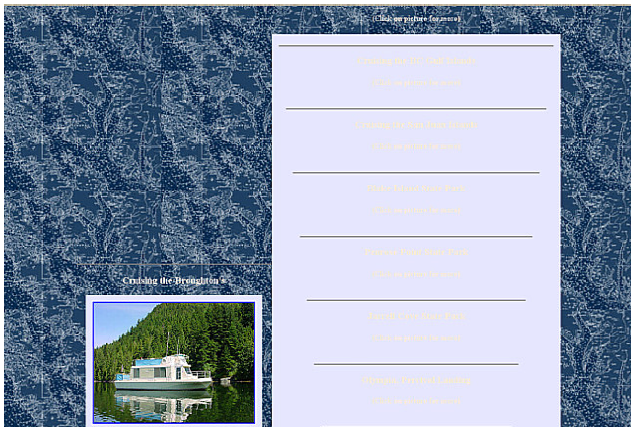


Figure 1

Here's how that portion of the page should look:

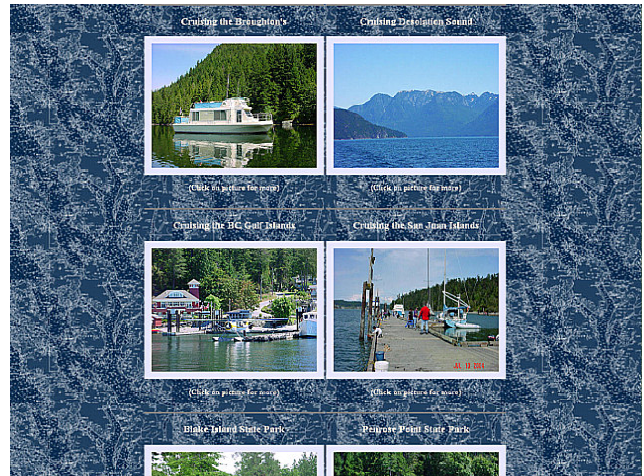


Figure 2:

By examining the HTML code for the page, I found that the first point at which Firefox went awry was where it would not display an image tag:

```
<img src=""our_cruising_area-2.jpg" border=""1" width=""480" alt=""Our Cruising Area"">
```

This tag was imbedded in the cell of a table immediately following a comment tag:

```
<!------- Start TABLE 3a2 -->
```

I had embedded these comments to keep track of the tables that I had in the HTML file.

The comment tag starts with “<!--” and ends with “-->”. Anything between these tags is a comment that should not be shown on the rendered page. After some experimenting, I suspected that Firefox was getting confused by the dash characters within the comment. So I tried replacing those dash characters with asterisks:

```
<!--***** Start TABLE 3a2 -->
```

Surprise. Firefox 3.6 now correctly rendered the image tag following the comment tag. Then, after replacing the dash characters within the rest of the comment tags, the remainder of the page rendered correctly.

It should be noted that the rendering error did not appear in IE8, Chrome, or Opera browsers, as well as the Firefox 4 Beta version.

**Editor's Note:** The number of dashes and asrerisks in the above examples were reduced to fit the column width of the article.

## OPERATING SYSTEM NOTES & TIPS

### On the Subject of Hard Drive Failures

by Carl Tenning, President  
Tacoma Open Group For Microcomputers

Only once in many years of owning a personal computer (five at present) have I actually had a true mechanical or electrical total failure of a hard drive. Actually, hard drive malfunctions have been very rare. But my last failure was truly a total drive failure where the drive actually had to be replaced. Most failures however, when they did occur, were a case of hard drive data corruption for whatever reason. In the later case, the drive was usually restored by re-formatting partition C: and reloading the operating system from either the original installation CD or a system backup. In my last failure, however, I had to physically replace the drive and reload the operating system from the original CD because both of my two backups failed to work. One was an Acronis backup on an external USB drive that was somehow corrupted and another was on an internal SATA drive that couldn't be accessed for some reason.

Well anyway, even though the operating system and all of the applications can be reloaded in a day or two, everything in "My Documents" was lost. In the case of the failure just being partition C: wouldn't it be nice if My Documents were located not on partition C: but on a different partition that usually survives this type of failure. The answer is "YES". Windows can move the location of My Documents very easily. Just find the My Documents folder on the C: drive under C:\Documents and Settings\User Name\My Documents. Right click on the folder and drag it to the root directory of a different drive letter. Windows will open up a dialog box:

Move the mouse while holding the right button, to over the "Move Here" entry and release. After a few minutes "My Documents" will permanently be located on a different partition.



Once you have moved My Documents off of drive C: to another drive letter, "My Documents" will no longer appear in "My Computer". Here is how to restore the "My Documents" icon to "My Computer":

Find (or remember) your login user name. Hold the Ctrl-Alt-Delete keys together to open Task Manager. Select the "Users" tab. Your user name will be displayed here.

The next step requires a registry edit. Click on Start > Run and enter "regedit" (without the quotes). This opens the registry editor. Expand HKEY\_LOCAL\_MACHINE>SOFTWARE>Microsoft>Windows>CurrentVersion>Explorer and highlight DocFolderPath. Add a new string value by clicking on Edit>New>String Value. Change the name of the String Value to your user name. Next edit the value to show the path to My Documents, for example:

E:\My Documents

Close the regedit application.

Now opening the My Computer icon, it will show an icon for "Your name's Documents".

p.s the procedure only applies to Windows XP.



### What is "URL" Encoding?

by Carl Tenning,  
Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers

The term "URL" means Uniform Resource Locator. It's what web browsers use to request pages from web servers. URLs can only be sent over the Internet using the ASCII character set. Non ASCII characters and unsafe ASCII characters are encoded into 3-character codes beginning with the percent symbol followed by a two digit hex code.

The URL to the TOGGLE website is <http://toggle.org>, but it could be encoded as:  
<http:%74%6F%67%67%6C%65%2E%6F%72%67>. Try it, you get the same page.

When using a search engine like GOOGLE, the search term or terms are encoded into the URL. That is why you may see a bunch of percent symbols in the search term. Such encoding could also be used by malware. Beware of links in e-mails that have encoded the URL so that you do not recognize the destination.



"Don't think of it as getting a flu shot. Think of it as installing virus protection software."

## The “%” Character in URL’s

By Carl Tenning

Tacoma Open Group For Microcomputers

When I review the visitors to my web page, my web host gives me the link from which the viewer came from. Here’s an example: <http://www.google.com/url?q=cruising%20the%20broughton%20islands>

This link came from GOOGLE using the search term “cruising the broughton islands”

Notice the “%20” encoding in the url. This is the encoding for the space character. The space character is encoded as “%20” because URL’s do not allow any spaces within them. A number of other encodings have also been defined. Here is a table:

Character	Coding
Space	%20
Quotation Marks	%22
# character	%23
\$ character	%24
% character	%25
& character	%26
+ character	%2B
Comma	%2C
Forward slash	%2F
Colon	%3A
Semicolon	%3B
< symbol	%3C
= symbol	%3D
> symbol	%3E
Question mark	%3F
@ symbol	%40
[ symbol	%5B
Backslash	%5C
] symbol	%5D
^ symbol	%5E
Grave accent (‘)	%60
Left brace {	%7B
Vertical bar	%7C
Right brace }	%7D
Tilde ~	%7E

## Prepare a Windows 7 Repair Disk

By Jeff Levy

*This lesson is copyright by Jeff Levy and reprinted with permission. All of his more than 400 lessons for both the PC and the Mac can be found on his Web site, [jefflevy.com](http://jefflevy.com).*

Today’s Windows 7 computers typically don’t ship with a system repair disk, and that’s a major problem if that computer suffers a crash. If you don’t have a system repair disk, you’re literally up the creek without a paddle.

The lesson here? Make your own system recovery disk and do it right now.

Here’s how.

Place a writable CD or DVD drive in your CD or DVD writable drive, and from within Windows 7, click on Start, type repair, and then select create a system repair disk. From there, just follow the instructions, remove and label the disk when you are finished, and then put it in a safe place.

If you ever need to use it, place that disk in your CD or DVD drive. Then restart your computer and watch the screen. Notice which key is suggested in order to get into the setup and then press that key. Once in setup, look for the order in which your computer boots up (finds and runs Windows) and change the current settings so that your computer first looks for Windows on your CD or DVD drive. Press the F10 key to save and exit, and your computer will boot up from that disk.

Now you’ll have several recovery and diagnostic calls to choose from. You’ll also be able use a system restore point when your computer was working.

“Jeff Levy on Computers” can be heard at 5 p.m. every Saturday on KABC, 790 AM. Sports events often force a time change in the show, so check his website regularly for the current week’s scheduled. Jeff’s notes for every show are at [www.jefflevy.com](http://www.jefflevy.com). Click on Show Notes on the opening page to access a wealth of information.

Jeff has added an additional project to his list of tasks: Snapshot Talk Radio, Your Eye on the World of Photography. The Website is <http://www.snapshottalkradio.com>. Jeff cohosts the program with Timothy E. Goodwin, The Photo Professor. The website’s pages are Home, About the Hosts, Tim’s Gallery, How to, Ask Jeff & Tim, Cameras, Printers, Accessories, Show Notes, Pod Casts and Show Information.

The website says the show is on the following stations: Los Angeles (KABC - AM), San Francisco (KNEW - AM), Seattle (KVI - AM) and Salt Lake City (Freedom 570 - AM).

## Safe Mode

by Bill Pryor, Internet SIG Leader, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, <http://www.lvcg.org>, [bpryor \(at\) ptd.net](mailto:bpryor@ptd.net)

Windows Safe Mode available in Win 95, 98, ME, 2000, XP, Vista, Win 7 allows you oftentimes to boot up Windows when you can not normally run Windows at all. For example, if you can't run Windows at all, upon boot up, press F8 to get Windows to boot in the Safe Mode. In Safe Mode just the essential programs and files are loaded; this allows you to remove some spyware, adware, and viruses that cannot be removed in Normal Mode.

For example one of our office networked computers last week picked up a virus type program that would not allow XP to run at all! Every time an .EXE file needed to run, nothing would happen. Click on any icon to run, nothing would happen. The system was completely dysfunctional in the Normal Mode. Nothing would run at all!

Not wasting time in Google, or the listed "miracle ways" of solving this "sneak attack" by all the "virus experts" and their companies which are often really tiresome to read in all their verbosity. I just booted up by pressing F8, went into the XP Safe Mode. In the Safe Mode the anticipated programs ran fine, and at that point, I ran my Malware Bytes program which did not respond or run in the Normal Mode, but in this Safe Mode, Malware Bytes ran fine and picked up the Hijack.exe virus and quarantined it! I then rebooted the computer normally and everything ran fine again! (Not sure of the System Restore points in this instance, I elected not to use System Restore to save current essential data, and only ran the current Malware Bytes).

No special programs to download, no special techniques to use, no mystifying and complicated definitions to comprehend. Just use your computer and programs in Safe Mode. Pragmatically it is that simple!

In another instance I had an old Sony VIAO laptop that would boot up, and you would see the Desktop, and the whole screen would be frozen making the laptop really unusable. In this instance, I booted up in Safe Mode as I explained above, and removed a corrupt startup program that was in the Start Up folder. And now the whole laptop runs like new!

Problems, let's not over complicate, or get excited, or look at the long faluten' explanations that most people love to hear from the mouths of virus experts. Just PRESS F8 and get into the Safe Mode! Use this simple procedure in a simple way, and your computing life will be much easier!!

## Do You Know the Difference Between http and https?

The main difference between <http://> and <https://> is: It's all about keeping you secure.

HTTP stands for Hyper Text Transfer Protocol. The S (big surprise) stands for "Secure." If you visit a website or web page, and look at the address in the web browser, it will likely begin with the following: <http://>. The main difference between <http://> and <https://> is: It's all about keeping you secure.

This means that the website is talking to your browser using the regular "unsecured" language. In other words, it is possible for someone to "eavesdrop" on your computer's conversation with the website. If you fill out a form on the website, someone might see the information you send to that site.

This is why you never ever enter your credit card number in an [http](http://) website! But if the web address begins with <https://> that basically means your computer is talking to the website in a secure code that no one can eavesdrop on.

You understand why this is so important, right? If a website ever asks you to enter your credit card information, you should automatically look to see if the web address begins with <https://>. If it doesn't, you should NEVER enter sensitive information - such as a credit card number.

Source: Pete Everett, HHICC, SC



## Cartoon

From Danbury Area Computer Society newsletter,  
December 2010



Sorry, Bob, but "A year of tweets is not thesis material, even if it is over 60,000 words."

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# Help Lines

<b>HARDWAREHELP</b>	<b>AdvisorNo.</b>
Reformat Hard Disk, FDISK	2, 4, 5
Install Hard Drive, CD-ROM/RW	2, 4, 5
Install Video Card	7
Partitioning Hard Drives	2
Internet/Intranet	6, 7
Audio Cards	4
MPs Files, WMA Files, WAV Files	3, 4
Burning CD's	3, 5
Homesite	7
Net Objects	7

<b>SOFTWAREHELP</b>	<b>AdvisorNo.</b>
Win 95/98/ME/2K/NT/XP	2, 3, 4, 7
Win 7	4, 7
Microsoft Word	2, 7
Microsoft Excel	4
Microsoft PowerPoint	4
WordPerfect	1, 7
Norton/Symantec AntiVirus	2, 3, 6, 7
Norton System Works	2, 7
CompuPic / CompuPic Pro	3, 7
Winzip, WinRAR	6
Ccleaner	3, 4
Outlook, Outlook Express	2
Internet Explorer	2, 7
RegSeeker	3, 5
Instant Messaging	2
Installing Software after Reformatting	5
Deleting Files; Wiping	6

## ADVISORS

<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Hours</b>
[1] Fred Shelton	(253)752-0120	Variable
[2] Bob Henkel	(253)537-6732	8A-8P any day
[3] Tom Stepanek	(253)922-7939	7-9P Mon-Fri
[4] Carl Tenning	(206)824-3843	6-9P Mon-Fri
[5] Oclad Wesley	(253)212-0352	6-9P
[6] Bob Thomson	(253)752-5582	Variable
[7] Ray Mills	(360)692-7568	6-9P Mon-Sat

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### Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers (TOG)

#### New Member Application/Existing Member Change of Address Form

For **Tacoma Open Group** annual membership, send form (if needed) & **\$25** to Bob Henkel., 10613 25th Avenue E., Tacoma, WA 98445.  
Make checks payable to TOG

Please print or type. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsored by: \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_ Plus Four \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**TACOMA MEETING**

When: **Mon 10 Jan 2011 -7:00 PM**  
Where: SE Tacoma Community Centre  
1614 99th Street E.  
Tacoma, Washington

From I-5 take Exit 127 (Hwy 512) to  
Portland Ave., north on Portland to 99th,  
left over tracks. Building is on south side.

Future Dates: 2nd Monday of Month

**TOG BOARD MEMBERS**

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web page: <http://www.rm-a.com>

**TOG Web Site:** <http://www.toggle.org>

Deadline: 15th of this month to appear  
in next months' issue, if room

**Corporate Sponsors:**

**Raymond Mills & Associates**  
[www.rm-a.com](http://www.rm-a.com)

**How To get To The Meeting**

For those readers still unfamiliar with how to find our meeting place we have reproduced the map showing its relationship in Tacoma to Portland Ave S. and the 512 Freeway. The 512 Freeway can be entered from I-5 in Tacoma on the west or from Hwy 167 in Puyallup on the east. Proceed to Portland off-ramp and turn north to 99th Street. Some folks in the middle of Tacoma may prefer to take Portland southbound to 99th. At 99th turn west over the tracks and there you are!



**Tacoma OPEN Group for Micros**  
**1808 Lenore Drive**  
**Tacoma, WA 98406-1920**

**Change Service Requested**

**PROGRAMS**

**This Month's Meeting**

This will be a regular monthly meeting. Meeting discussions are always interesting and the ever-popular Q&A (Question & Answer) period is sure to pique your interest, come up to your expectations and tickle your fancy. Come and share your own experiences, problems and discoveries.

No formal program presentation has been announced at press time. However, lively discussion of current topics will certainly take place. Please join us and bring your questions and join in the discussion.